

REMARKS

Claims 4 – 7 and 9 are pending. Claims 1 – 3, 8 and 10 have been canceled. The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

In paragraph 6 of the office action, dependent claims 4 – 7 and 9 were objected to, but indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 4, 5 and 9 have been re-written in independent form to include claim 1 or 3, and it is respectfully submitted that claims 4, 5 and 9 as rewritten are allowable. Claims 6 – 7, depending from allowable re-written claim 5, should now be allowable. In view of the above, the applicant submits that the claims are patentable.

The applicant has rewritten the claims in independent form since the office action indicated that claims 4 – 7 and 9 would be allowable if so re-written. However, the applicant does not concede that other features in the claims are found in the prior art. The applicant wishes to clarify for the record, if necessary, that the claims have been amended to expedite prosecution.

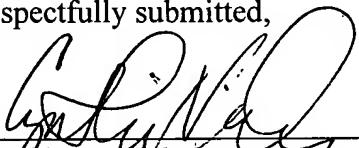
Any narrowing amendment to the claims in the present Amendment is not to be construed as a surrender of any subject matter between the original claims and the present claims; rather this is merely an attempt at providing one or more definitions of what the applicant believes to be suitable patent protection. In addition, the present claims provide the intended scope of protection that the applicant is seeking for this application. Therefore, no estoppel should be presumed, and the applicant's claims are intended to include a scope of protection under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

For all the reasons advanced above, the applicant respectfully submits that the claims as amended are allowable.

In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia K. Nicholson
Reg. No. 36,880

Posz Law Group, PLC
12040 South Lakes Drive, Suite 101
Reston, VA 20191
Phone 703-707-9110
Fax 703-707-9112
Customer No. 23400